

Fish Farm  
General Permit  
Permit No.: MTG130000

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

**CONCENTRATED AQUATIC ANIMAL / FISH FARM GENERAL PERMIT**

**AUTHORIZATION TO DISCHARGE UNDER THE**

**MONTANA POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM**

In compliance with Montana Water Quality Act, Title 75, Chapter 5, Montana Code Annotated (MCA), and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (the "Clean Water Act"), 33 U.S.C. 1251 et. seq., applicants issued an authorization letter for this Fish Farm General Permit, are permitted to discharge wastewater effluent from fish farms and hatcheries to state waters in accordance with effluent limitations, monitoring requirements and other conditions set forth herein.

A written authorization letter from the Department is required before an applicant is authorized to discharge under the Fish Farm General Permit.

This permit shall become effective: **June 1, 2006**.

This permit and the authorization to discharge shall expire at midnight: **May 31, 2011**.

FOR THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

/S/

Bonnie Lovelace, Chief  
Water Protection Bureau  
Permitting and Compliance Division

Issuance Date: **April 20, 2006**

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I. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS, MONITORING REQUIREMENTS, & OTHER CONDITIONS

A. Specific Effluent Limitations

Effectively immediately upon issuance of an authorization under this general permit and lasting for the duration of the permit, the following effluent limitations apply to all fish farm facilities covered by this general permit.

1. All facilities must develop and implement a waste management plan (WMP) to minimize the discharge of hatchery wastes to state waters. The WMP must be updated and submitted for review and approval to the Department by January 28<sup>th</sup> of each year. The plan must include the minimum requirements described in Part I.C.
2. There shall be no discharge of polychlorinated byphenyls (PCBs) in excess of 0.00017 µg/L in any sample. Analytical results less than the required reporting value (RRV) of 1 µg/L shall be reported as zero on the DMR and will be considered in compliance with this limit.
3. Drug and chemical use shall be limited to those approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use in aquaculture in accordance with label requirements. Pesticides must be registered for use in Montana by the Montana Department of Agriculture. Any extra-label use of approved drugs and chemicals or use of unapproved drugs and chemicals will require case-by-case approval by the Department prior to the discharge to state waters. All drug and chemical use shall be documented in the annual WMP.
4. Any additional requirements specified in the authorization letter.

**B. Self-Monitoring Requirements**

Upon the effective date of this permit, the following constituents shall be monitored at the frequency and with the type of measurement indicated; samples or measurements shall be representative of the volume and nature of the monitored discharge.

Discharge monitoring shall be conducted at the end of pipe, prior to discharge to the receiving water. Samples from multiple discharge pipes shall be flow proportioned and composited prior to analysis.

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Type<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>RRV</b>
Flow Rate (gpm)	Monthly <sup>(2)</sup>	Instantaneous	NA
PCBs µg/L	Semi-Annual	Grab	1 µg/L
Fish Food Fed (lbs/day)	Daily <sup>(3)</sup>	Measured	NA
Total Suspended Solids <sup>(4)</sup> (mg/L)	Semi-Annual	Grab	1 mg/L

- (1) See the definitions in Part I.A. of the permit.
- (2) Both the average flow during the monitoring period and the highest average monthly flow shall be reported.
- (3) Both the average daily feeding rate during the monitoring period and the maximum daily feeding rate shall be reported
- (4) TSS monitoring is only required at facilities with production greater than or equal to 20,000 pounds per year

All monitoring shall be reported semi-annually on Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) forms (EPA No. 3320-1).

All monitoring shall be conducted during the month of maximum feeding within the monitoring period.

**C. Waste Management Plan / Best Management Practices**

The annual WMP plan shall be submitted by January 28<sup>th</sup> of each year and shall be attached to the DMR form for the July to December monitoring period of the previous year. The WMP shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. A written plan for the efficient feeding of fish in the facility that will maximize feed conversion and minimize the amount of metabolic wastes and uneaten food produced, and still allow the achievement of production goals. This plan could include, but is not limited to, the following: projected annual production, feeding methods that will be used, appropriate record-keeping of feed consumption, feed storage and handling methods, and any other means employed to minimize waste solids.
2. A description and schedule of cleaning and maintenance activities that will minimize the amount of waste discharged at any one time. This must include, at a minimum,

the weekly cleaning of raceways, unless otherwise approved for a specific fish species' rearing requirements in an approved Waste Management Plan. Records of raceway cleaning must be maintained on site.

3. A description, including dosage rates, total quantity used, and calculated concentrations, of all drugs and chemicals that will be used routinely in hatchery operations.

Additional Best Management Practices for facilities that produce 20,000 pounds or more of fish per year shall include the following:

4. As part of the annual WMP each facility shall submit the total pounds of food fed for the previous calendar year, the total weight gain of all fish in the facility the previous calendar year, and the corresponding feed conversion ratio (FCR). FCRs may be calculated for individual lots of fish, providing all fish produced are accounted for.
5. Sweeping accumulated solids from raceways or ponds to state waters without treatment is prohibited.
6. Practices such as the removal of dam boards or standpipes in raceways or ponds, which allow accumulated solids to discharge to state waters without treatment, are prohibited.
7. The annual WMP must include a description of the methods for cleaning accumulated wastes from settling basins of other treatment units. The plan must also address the disposal of the wastes in such a manner that they will not reach state waters.

D. Compliance Schedule

Facilities with production capacity of 20,000 pounds or more per year that are currently unable to comply with the BMP requirements prohibiting direct discharge of waste solids to state waters will be authorized to discharge under this permit but will be required to upgrade their facilities so the BMP requirements can be met. All other permit requirements will remain in full effect. The required upgrades shall be completed by the expiration date of this permit. The Department will determine which facilities are subject to this compliance schedule, based on inspections, applications, or other available information, at the time authorization is granted. Each facility subject to this requirement will have it so stated in their authorization letter and will be required to submit annual progress reports to the Department by January 28 of each year.

## II. MONITORING, RECORDING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### A. Reporting Requirements

All required monitoring shall be reported on a Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR), postmarked no later than the 28th day of the month following the monitoring period. Submit completed DMR forms and all reports to the following address:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
Water Protection Bureau  
P.O. Box 200901  
Helena, Montana 59620-0901  
Phone: (406) 444-3080

### B. Monitoring Procedures

Monitoring must be conducted according to test procedures approved under Part 136 Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, unless other test procedures have been specified in this permit.

### C. Additional Monitoring by Permittee

If the permittee monitors any pollutant at the location(s) designated herein more frequently than required by this permit the results of such monitoring shall be included in the DMR form. Such increased frequency shall be indicated.

### D. Record Retention

All records and information resulting from the monitoring activities required by this permit shall be retained for a minimum of three (3) years, or longer if requested by the Department.

### E. Noncompliance Notification

If for any reason, the permittee does not comply with or will be unable to comply with any effluent limitation specified in this permit, the permittee shall notify as soon as possible by phone and provide the Department with the following information, in writing, within five (5) days of becoming aware of such condition:

1. A description of the discharge and cause of noncompliance; and
2. The period of noncompliance including exact dates and times, or if not corrected, the anticipated time the noncompliance is expected to continue, and steps being taken to reduce, eliminate and prevent recurrence of the non-complying discharge.

### F. Inspection and Entry

The permittee shall allow the head of the Department or the Regional Administrator, or an authorized representative, upon the presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, to:

1. Enter upon the permittee's premises where a regulated facility or activity is located or conducted, or where records must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
2. Have access to and copy, at reasonable times, any records that must be kept under the conditions of this permit;
3. Inspect at reasonable times any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this permit; and,
4. Sample, or monitor at reasonable times for the purpose of assuring permit compliance, any substances or parameters at any location.

### III. COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Duty to Comply

The permittee must comply with all conditions of this permit. Any permit noncompliance constitutes a violation of the Act and is grounds for enforcement action; for permit termination, revocation and reissuance, or modification; or for denial of a permit renewal application. The permittee shall give the Department advance notice of any planned changes at the permitted facility or of an activity, which may result in permit noncompliance.

B. Penalties for Violations of Permit Conditions

The Montana Water Quality Act provides that any person who violates a permit condition of the Act is subject to civil or criminal penalties not to exceed \$25,000 per day of such violation. Any person who willfully or negligently violates permit conditions of the Act is subject to a fine of not more than \$50,000 per day of violation, or by imprisonment for not more than 2 years, or both. Except as provided in permit conditions on Part III.G of this permit, "Bypass of Treatment Facilities" and Part III.H of this permit, "Upset Conditions", nothing in this permit shall be construed to relieve the permittee of the civil or criminal penalties for noncompliance.

C. Need to Halt or Reduce Activity not a Defense

It shall not be a defense for a permittee in an enforcement action that it would have been necessary to halt or reduce the permitted activity in order to maintain compliance with the conditions of this permit.

D. Duty to Mitigate

The permittee shall take all reasonable steps to minimize or prevent any discharge in violation of this permit, which has a reasonable likelihood of adversely affecting human health or the environment.

E. Toxic Pollutants

The permittee shall comply with effluent standards or prohibitions established under Section 307(a) of the Act for toxic pollutants within the time provided in the regulations that establish those standards or prohibitions, even if the permit has not yet been modified to incorporate the requirement.

F. Changes in Discharge of Toxic Substances

Notification shall be provided to the Department as soon as the permittee knows of, or has reason to believe:

1. That any activity has occurred or will occur which would result in the discharge, on a routine or frequent basis, of any toxic pollutant which is not limited in the permit, if that discharge will exceed the highest of the following "notification levels":
  - a. One hundred micrograms per liter (100 µg/l);



- b. Two hundred micrograms per liter (200 µg/l) for acrolein and acrylonitrile; five hundred micrograms per liter (500 µg/l) for 2,4-dinitrophenol and for 2-methyl-4, 6-dinitrophenol; and one milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;
  - c. Five (5) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with 40 CFR 122.21(g)(7); or,
  - d. The level established by the Department in accordance with 40 CFR 122.44(f).
2. That any activity has occurred or will occur which would result in any discharge, on a non-routine or infrequent basis, of a toxic pollutant which is not limited in the permit, if that discharge will exceed the highest of the following "notification levels":
- a. Five hundred micrograms per liter (500 µg/l);
  - b. One milligram per liter (1 mg/l) for antimony;
  - c. Ten (10) times the maximum concentration value reported for that pollutant in the permit application in accordance with 40 CFR 122.21(g)(7); or,
  - d. The level established by the Department in accordance with 40 CFR 122.44(f).

#### IV. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Planned Changes

The permittee shall give notice to the Department as soon as possible of any planned physical alterations or additions to the permitted facility. Notice is required only when the alteration or addition could significantly change the nature or increase the quantity of pollutant discharged. This notification applies to pollutants, which are not subject to effluent limitations in the permit.

B. Anticipated Noncompliance

The permittee shall give advance notice to the Department of any planned changes in the permitted facility or activity, which may result in noncompliance with permit requirements.

C. Permit Actions

This permit may be modified, revoked and reissued, or terminated for cause. The filing of a request by the permittee for a permit modification, revocation and reissuance, or termination, or a notification of planned changes or anticipated noncompliance, does not stay any permit condition.

D. Duty to Reapply

If the permittee wishes to continue an activity regulated by this permit after the expiration date of the authorization to discharge, the permittee must apply for and obtain a new authorization. The request must be submitted at least 180 days before the anticipated operation date. A new application must be submitted with the correct application fee after the fifth year of operation and shall be submitted within 180 days before the anticipated operation date.

E. Duty to Provide Information

The permittee shall furnish to the Department, within a reasonable time, any information which the Department may request to determine whether cause exists for modifying, revoking and reissuing, or terminating this permit, or to determine compliance with this permit. The permittee shall also furnish to the Department, upon request, copies of records required to be kept by this permit.

F. Other Information

When the permittee becomes aware that it failed to submit any relevant facts in a permit application, or submitted incorrect information in a permit application or any report to the Department, it shall promptly submit such facts or information.

G. Signatory Requirements

All applications, reports or information submitted to the Department shall be signed and certified.

1. All permit applications shall be signed as follows:

- a. For a corporation: by a responsible corporate officer;
  - b. For a partnership or sole proprietorship: by a general partner or the proprietor, respectively;
  - c. For a municipality, State, Federal, or other public agency: by either a principal executive officer or ranking elected official.
2. All reports required by the permit and other information requested by the Department shall be signed by a person described above or by a duly authorized representative of that person. A person is considered a duly authorized representative only if:
- a. The authorization is made in writing by a person described above and submitted to the Department, and,
  - b. The authorization specified either an individual or a position having responsibility for the overall operation of the regulated facility or activity, such as the position of plant manager, operator of a well or a well field, superintendent, position of equivalent responsibility, or an individual or position having overall responsibility for environmental matters for the company. (A duly authorized representative may thus be either a named individual or any individual occupying a named position.)
3. Changes to authorization. If an authorization under Part IV.G.2 of this permit is no longer accurate because a different individual or position has responsibility for the overall operation of the facility, a new authorization satisfying the requirements of Part IV.G.2 of this permit must be submitted to the Department prior to or together with any reports, information, or applications to be signed by an authorized representative.
4. Certification. Any person signing a document under this section shall make the following certification:

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."

- H. Penalties for Falsification of Reports  
The Montana Water Quality Act provides that any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification in any record or other document submitted or required to be maintained under this permit, including monitoring reports or reports of compliance or noncompliance shall, upon conviction be punished by a fine of not more than \$25,000 per violation, or by imprisonment for not more than six months per violation, or by both.
- I. Availability of Reports  
Except for data determined to be confidential under 40 CFR Part 2, all reports prepared in accordance with the terms of this permit shall be available for public inspection at the offices of the Department. As required by the Clean Water Act, permit applications, permits and effluent data shall not be considered confidential.
- J. Oil and Hazardous Substance Liability  
Nothing in this permit shall be construed to preclude the institution of any legal action or relieve the permittee from any responsibilities, liabilities, or penalties to which the permittee is or may be subject under Section 311 of the Clean Water Act.
- K. Property or Water Rights  
The issuance of this permit does not convey any property or water rights of any sort, or any exclusive privileges, nor does it authorize any injury to private property or any invasion of personal rights, nor any infringement of federal, state or local laws or regulations.
- L. Severability  
The provisions of this permit are severable, and if any provision of this permit, or the application of any provision of this permit to any circumstance, is held invalid, the application of such provision to other circumstances, and the remainder of this permit, shall not be affected thereby.
- M. Transfers  
This permit cannot be transferred to a new permittee. A new owner or operator of a facility must apply according to the application procedures in Part IV.D of this permit 30 days prior to taking responsibility for the facility.
- N. Fees  
The permittee is required to submit payment of an annual fee as set forth in ARM 17.30.201. If the permittee fails to pay the annual fee within 90 days after the due date for payment, the Department may:
1. Impose an additional assessment consisting of 15% of the fee plus interest on the required fee computed at the rate established under 15-31-510(3), MCA; or
  2. Suspend the processing of the application for a permit or authorization or, if the nonpayment involves an annual permit fee, suspend the permit, certificate, license

or other authorization for which the fee is required. The Department may lift the suspension at any time up to one year after the suspension occurs if the holder has paid all outstanding fees, including all penalties, assessments and interest imposed under this subsection.

O. Reopener Provisions

This permit may be reopened and modified (following proper administrative procedures) to include the appropriate effluent limitations (and compliance schedule, if necessary), or other appropriate requirements if one or more of the following events occurs:

1. Water Quality Standards: The water quality standards of the receiving water(s) to which the permittee discharges are modified in such a manner as to require different effluent limits than contained in this permit.
2. TMDL or Wasteload Allocation: TMDL requirements or a wasteload allocation is developed and approved by the Department and/or EPA for incorporation in this permit.
3. Water Quality Management Plan: A revision to the current water quality management plan is approved and adopted which calls for different effluent limitations than contained in this permit.
4. Toxic Pollutants: A toxic standard or prohibition is established under Section 307(a) of the Act for a toxic pollutant which is present in the discharge and such standard or prohibition is more stringent than any limitation for such pollutant in this permit.

V. DEFINITIONS

1. "**Department**" means the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).
2. A "**grab**" sample, for monitoring requirements, is defined as a single "dip and take" sample collected at a representative point in the discharge stream.
3. An "**instantaneous**" measurement, for monitoring requirements, is defined as a single reading, observation, or measurement.
4. A "**mixing zone**" means a limited area of a surface water body or aquifer where initial dilution of a discharge takes place and where water quality changes may occur. Also recognized as an area where certain water quality standards may be exceeded.
5. "**Non-degradation**" means the prevention of a significant change in water quality that lowers the quality of high-quality water for one or more parameters. Also, the prohibition of any increase in discharge that exceeds the limits established under or determined from a permit or approval issued by the Department prior to April 29, 1993.

6. The term "**TMDL**" means the total maximum daily load limitation of a parameter, representing the estimated assimilative capacity for a water body before other designated uses are adversely affected. Mathematically, it is the sum of wasteload allocations for point sources, load allocations for non-point and natural background sources, and a margin of safety.
7. The "**receiving stream**" means the river, stream, or creek, which receives the wastewater discharge from the facility.